

## Organization of Minnesota Territory.

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### ORGANIZATION OF MINNESOTA TERRITORY.

[FROM THE "ANNALS" OF 1851.]

Wisconsin was admitted into the Union on the 29th day of May, 1848; and the first public meeting in Minnesota Territory, was held at Stillwater, on the 5th day of August, 1848, to consider whether the laws of the Territory of Wisconsin were in force beyond the limits of that State. Johnathan E. Mckusick presided at this meeting, and William Holcombe acted as the Secretary. M. S. Wilkinson , Dr. Carli, David Lambert, Jacob Fisher , and others, were present. Sundry resolutions were adopted, and the letter of Hon. John Catlin, who had been Secretary of the Territory of Wisconsin, was read, as follows:

Madison , August 22, 1848.

Hon. Wm. Holcombe—Dear Sir :—

I take the liberty to write you briefly for the purpose of ascertaining what the citizens of the present Territory of Wisconsin desire in relation to the organization of a Territorial Government. Congress adjourned on the 14th inst., without taking any steps to organize the Territory of Minnesota. or of amending the act of 1836, organizing Wisconsin, so that the present government could be successfully continued.

I have given Mr. Bowron , by whom I send this. a copy of Mr. Buchanan's opinion, by which he gives it as his opinion that the laws of Wisconsin are in force in your Territory; and if the laws are in force, I think it is equally clear that the officers necessary to carry out those laws are still in office. After the organization of the State of Michigan, but before

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her admission, Gen. G. W. Jones was elected by the Territory of Michigan, (now State of Wisconsin,) and was allowed to take his seat.

It is my opinion that if your people were to elect a delegate this fall, he would be allowed to take his seat in December, and then a government might be fully organized; and unless a delegate is elected and sent 54 on, I do not believe a government will be organized for several years. You are aware of the difficulty which has prevented the organization of Oregon for two years past; and the same difficulty will prevent the organization of Minnesota. If Mr. Tweedy were to resign, (and he would if requested,) I do not see anything to prevent my issuing a proclamation for an election to fill the vacancy, as the acting Governor; but should not like to do so unless the people would act under it and hold the election.

If a delegate was elected by color of law, Congress never would inquire into the legality of the election.

It is the opinion of most all this way that the government of the Territory of Wisconsin still continues, although it is nearly inoperative, for want of a court and legislature.

I write in haste, and have not time to state further the reasons which lead me to the conclusion that the Territorial Government is still in being; but you can confer with Mr. Bowron , who, I believe, is in possession of the views and opinions entertained here on the subject.

I shall be pleased to hear from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours very respectfully, JOHN CATLIN.

Judge Irvine , Mr. Martin , Gen. Jones, H. N. Wells, A. D. Smith, Chas. H. Larrabee, J. G. Knapp , and many others, entertain the opinion that the Territorial Government of Wisconsin was not abolished by the admission of the State of Wisconsin. but is still in

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being in that part of the former Territory not included within the limits of the State. Gov. Dewey told me he had no doubt on the subject.

The following is the opinion of the Hon. James Buchanan , Secretary of State, referred to in Mr. Catlin's letter, to wit:

“The question is, whether the laws of the Territory of Wisconsin still remain in force in that portion of it now beyond the limits of Wisconsin. I am clearly of opinion that these laws are still in force over the territory not embraced within the limits of the State. It cannot well be supposed that Congress, by admitting the State of Wisconsin into the Union, intended to deprive the citizens of the United States, beyond its limits, of the protection of existing laws; and there is nothing in their legislation from which any such inference can be drawn. The difficult question is, what officers still remain to carry those laws into execution. It is clear to my mind that all the local officers residing in counties without the State line, such as judges of probate, sheriffs, justices of the 55 peace, and constables, may exercise their appropriate functions as heretofore. Whether the general officers, such as Governor, Secretary, and Judges, appointed for the whole of the former Territory, are authorized to perform their duties within what remains of it, presents a question of greater difficulty, on which I express no opinion. Whatever may be the correct decision of this question, immediate legislation is required; because it is very certain that Congress will never consent to maintain the machinery provided for the government of the entire Territory, merely for the purpose of governing the twenty-five hundred or three thousand inhabitants who reside beyond the limits of the State.”

A second public meeting took place agreeably to the following notice, to wit:

### **NOTICE.**

We, the undersigned, citizens of Minnesota Territory, impressed with the necessity of taking measures to secure an early Territorial organization, and that those measures should be taken by the people with unity of action, respectfully recommend that the

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people of the several settlements in the proposed Territory appoint delegates to meet in convention at Stillwater, on the 26th day of August next, to adopt the necessary steps for that purpose.

Stillwater , Aug. 4, 1848.

### **[Signed.]**

Louis Roberts,

H. H. Sibley,

Jno. Mckusick,

M. S. Wilkinson,

Anson Northrop,

C. Carli,

Jno. R. Brewster,

H. K. McKinstry,

Jas D. Mccomb,

Jacob Fisher,

John Collier,

Jos. R. Brown,

W. Holcombe,

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H. L. Moss,

S. Nelson,

Franklin Steele,

P. A. R. Brace,

Horace Jacobs,

*[ Proceedings of a Territorial Convention held at the Court House at the town of Stillwater, in the county of St. Croix, and Territory of Wisconsin, on the 26th day of August, 1848, in accordance with the above notice .*

The delegates to the convention assembled at the court house at 10 o'clock, A. M.

On motion of Mr. Joseph R. Brown , the Convention was temporarily organized by the election of M. S. Wilkinson , Esq., of Stillwater, as President, and David Lambert , of St. Paul, as Secretary.

Mr. Joseph R. Brown offered the following resolution:

*Resolved* , That a committee of five be appointed to select a President, 56 two Vice Presidents, and two Secretaries as the permanent officers of this convention.

Which having been adopted, the chair appointed Messrs. Brown, Jackson, Fisher, Nelson and Sibley , as such committee.

The committee retired, and after consultation, reported through their chairman, the following gentlemen as officers of the convention:

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President, Samuel Burkleo ; Vice Presidents, Robert Kennedy, Joshua L. Taylor ; Secretaries, William Holcombe, David Lambert .

On motion of Henry Jackson , Esq., the report was accepted, and the committee discharged. The above named gentlemen were then unanimously elected to fill the several offices designated in the report.

The following resolution was then offered by Mr. Joseph R. Brown :

*Resolved* . That a committee of seven members be appointed to draft a memorial to Congress, for the early organization of the Territory of Minnesota, and to report such further proceedings as they may think proper for the action of this Convention.

Which was adopted. The chair appointed the following gentlemen as members of this committee under the above resolution, viz: Messrs. Joseph R. Brown, Calvin Leach, H. H. Sibley, S. Nelson, M. S. Wilkinson, H. Jackson , and H. L. Moss .

On motion of Mr. Larpenteur , the Convention then took a recess until half past one o'clock, P. M.

Half past one o'clock, P.M.

Mr. J. R. Brown , as chairman of the committee of seven, reported a memorial to Congress, and one to the President of the United States, on the subject of the organization of the Territory, together with the following preamble and resolutions:

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Whereas , by the admission of Wisconsin and Iowa into the Union with the boundaries prescribed by Congress, we, the inhabitants of the country formerly a portion of said Territories, are left without a government or officers to administer the laws: and

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Whereas , by the omission of Congress to organize a separate Territorial Government for the region of country which we inhabit, we are placed in the unparalleled position of being disfranchised of the rights and privileges which were guaranteed to us under the Ordinance of 1787: and without any fault of our own, and with every desire to be governed by laws, are in fact without adequate legal protection for our lives or property: and

Whereas , having patiently awaited the action of Congress during its late session, under the full hope and confidence that before the adjournment of that honorable body, a bill would have been passed for the organization of a Territorial Government to embrace our section of the country, we have been disappointed in our hopes, and cannot believe that the omission of Congress to act in the premises can proceed from any other cause than the want of an adequate acquaintance with the position in which we are placed, the character of the country, its population and resources:

Therefore, be it resolved, that a memorial be addressed to the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled, and also to his Excellency, the President of the United States, respectfully requesting that he will invite the attention of that Honorable body, in his annual message, to action in the premises.

*Resolved* , That a delegate be appointed by this Convention, with full power to act, whose duty it shall be to visit Washington during the ensuing session of Congress, and there to represent the interests of the proposed Territory, and to urge an immediate organization of the same.

*Resolved* , That a committee of three persons be appointed by the President of this Convention, residing upon the waters of the St. Croix, and three residing upon the waters of the Mississippi, who shall collect information relative to the amount of business transacted and capital employed within the limits of Minnesota Territory, and forward such information as soon as may be, to our Delegate.

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*Resolved* , That there shall be a committee of seven appointed by the President of this Convention to act as a central committee, whose duty it shall be to correspond with our Delegate at Washington, and to adopt all other proper means to forward the objects of this Convention.

The memorials, preamble and resolutions were severally read and unanimously adopted.

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On motion of Mr. Wilkinson , the Convention then proceeded to the election of a delegate to represent the interests of the Territory at Washington.

On the first ballot, Mr. H. H. Sibley , having received a majority of all the votes cast, was, on motion of Jos. R. Brown , declared unanimously elected by the Convention.

The chair appointed Messrs. J. R. Brown and P. A. R. Brace to wait on Mr. Sibley and inform him of his election.

Mr. Sibley then made his appearance in the Convention, and accepted the office conferred upon him in a few brief and appropriate remarks.

Mr. Wilkinson offered the following resolution, which was adopted:

*Resolved* , That the thanks of this Convention be rendered to Benjamin H. Cheever , Esq., for the exertions which he used at Washington city last winter, to procure the passage of a bill through Congress for the organization of the Territory of Minnesota.

The chair announced the following gentlemen as the committee to collect information as to business, capital, &c.:

On the Mississippi,—Messrs. Steele, Jackson and Hurtzell .

On the St. Croix, — Messrs. Holcombe, Walker and Taylor .



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Also, the following gentlemen to constitute the central committee:

H. L. Moss, David Lambert, Franklin Steele, Levi Hurtzell, S. Nelson, Orange Walker, Joshua L. Taylor .

Mr. Brown submitted the following resolution, which was adopted:

*Resolved* , That the proceedings of this Convention be signed by the officers thereof, and forwarded by the Secretaries to the editors of the *Prairie du Chien Patriot* , the *Madison*, *Dubuque* and *Galena* papers, and the *Washinton Union* and *National Intelligencer* , with a request for publication.

Mr. Wilkinson offered the following resolution, which was adopted:

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*Resolved* , That the President of this Convention is required to issue a certificate to H. H. Sibley , signed by himself, the Vice Presidents and Secretaries, certifying that he is a duly elected Delegate under resolution and action of this Convention.

On motion of Joseph R. Brown , the following resolution was adopted:

*Resolved* , That our Delegate be requested to cause the Orthography of Minnesota (when the organization of the Territory shall be effected) to be according to that used in this resolution.

Mr. Moss offered the following resolution which was adopted:

*Resolved* , That the Secretaries prepare copies of the memorials to the President of the United States, and to Congress, adopted by this Convention, with the signatures of members attached thereto, and furnish the same to Mr. H. H. Sibley , our Delegate, before his departure for Washington.

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The memorials were then signed by all the delegates to the Convention, amounting to sixty-one signatures.

Mr. Wilkinson moved a vote of thanks to the officers of the Convention, which was ordered.

On motion of Mr. Moss , the Convention adjourned *sine die* .

### **MEMORIAL TO HIS EXCELLENCY JAMES K. POLK, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.**

Your memorialists, citizens of the Territory north of the North Western boundary of Wisconsin, and of the Northern boundary of Iowa, ask leave respectfully to represent:

That the region of country which they inhabit, formed, formerly, a portion of the Territories of Iowa and Wisconsin, subject to the laws and government of those Territories; and a judicial circuit, having within its limits a seat of justice, where sessions of the District Court have been held, and the records of the court are deposited, had been established.

That this region of country is settled by a population of nearly 5,000 persons who are engaged in various industrial pursuits; that it contains 60 valuable pine forests, excellent arable land, mineral treasures, almost unequalled facilities for mills and manufactories, and possessing an exceedingly healthful climate, is capable of sustaining a dense and prosperous population; that its population is now constantly and rapidly increasing, and is characterized by industry, energy and sobriety.

That by the admission of Wisconsin into the Union with the boundaries prescribed by Congress, and the omission by that body to pass a law for the organization of a new Territory, embracing the portion of country inhabited by your memorialists, they and all their fellow citizens are left without officers to administer and execute the laws That having

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once enjoyed the rights and privileges of citizens of a Territory of the United States, they are now, without fault or blame of their own, virtually disfranchised.

They have no securities for their lives or property, but those which exist in mutual good understanding. Meanwhile, all proceedings in criminal cases, and all process for the collection of debts, are suspended; credit exists only so far as a perfect confidence in mutual good faith extends, and all the operations of business are embarrassed.

Your memorialists would respectfully represent, that even in a well-ordered and law-abiding community, such as they feel pride in declaring their own to be, such a state of affairs is fraught with evils and dangers. Its continuance will tend to prevent the immigration of the more valuable class of citizens of the United States, while it will open a door of invitation and allurements to the lawless and desperate. It will foster dishonest and disorderly principles and actions among their citizens, and if suffered to exist for a long period, will bring ruin upon a prosperous and fertile region.

They would further represent, that having been disappointed in their confident hopes that Congress would by its action at the late session of that Honorable body have relieved them from the painful position in which they are placed, by the passage of a law for the organization of a new Territory in the limits of which they should have been embraced, they now most respectfully lay their case before the highest Executive authority, earnestly asking that your Excellency will call the attention of Congress to their situation at the opening of the next annual session, and recommend the early organization of the Territory of Minnesota.

And your memorialists will ever pray, &c.

Joseph R. Brown, Crow Wing.

A. L. Larpenteur, St. Pauls.

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C. F. Leach, Stillwater.

H. L. Moss. do.

Morton S. Wilkinson, Stillwater.

David Lambert, St. Pauls.

W. Holcombe, Stillwater.

J. W. Simpson, St. Pauls.

Henry H. Sibley, Mendota.

H. Jackson, St. Pauls.

Jacob Fisher, Stillwater.

William Foreman, do

R. B. Johnson, do

Mahlon Black, do

W. R. Vail, do

H. K. McKinstry, do

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S. Nelson, Stillwater.

C. Carli, do

Wm. Stinohfield, do

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John Day, do

John Morgan do

Louis Robert, St. Pauls.

Joshua L. Taylor, Falls of St. Croix, West Side.

Samuel Burkleo, Stillwater.

Robert Kennedy, Pa. Farm.

William William, Stillwater.

Wm. R. Brown, Red Rock Prairie.

John A. Ford, do

James S. Norris, Cottage Grove.

P. A. R. Brace. Stillwater.

A. R. French, near St. Anthony Falls.

Stephen Denoyer, do

Vetal Guerin, St. Pauls.

David Hebert, do

Oliver Rosseau, do

Andre Godfrey, do

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Joseph Resh, St. Anthony.

Paschal St. Martin, do

Joseph Rondo, Sauk Rapids.

H. Chevri, Raccicot.

Peter Quinn, do

John Banfield, Rice Creek.

David T. Sloan, Sauk Rapids.

D. T. Holmes, do

Wm. Aitkin, Little Rock.

James R. Clewett, St. Pauls.

Edward Blake, Spunk Creek.

Michael Phelan, Crow Wing.

J. B. Cory, Cernelian Lake.

N. B. Ferrell, Rum River.

P. Flinn, do

John W. McLaughlin, Cottage Grove.

Richard McDonald, Little Rock.

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James D. McComb, Point Douglas.

Samuel F. Brown, Boles' Mill.

Edward Phalen, Prospect Hill.'

Wm. G. Carter, do

Francis Morran. Gervais' Mill.

James Patten, Pt. Douglas.

Peter Gervais, Gervais' Mill.

D. McDonald, Crew Wing.

Hon. John H. Tweedy , having resigned his office of Delegate to Congress, on Sept. 18th, 1848, Hon. John Catlin , claiming to be acting Governor of Wisconsin Territory, issued on Oct. 9th, a proclamation dated at Stillwater, where he was temporarily residing, ordering a special election at that place to fill the vacancy.] Said election was accordingly held on the 30th day of October, 1848. Hon. H. H. Sibley being elected the delegate, attended the session of Congress of 1848–9 as such, and after the adjournment thereof, published [in the Minnesota *Pioneer* ] an address to the people of Minnesota Territory, from which we extract. Mr. Sibley says in that address:

“I arrived in Washington two days before Congress convened, and I soon became convinced that my admission as Delegate was extremely uncertain, in fact I may say absolutely improbable.\* My credentials were presented on the

\* [In an address before the first annual banquet of the “Old Settlers' Association of Minnesota,” June 1, 1858, Gov. Sibley referred to the difficulties attending the organization of the Territory, as follows:]

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"I desire that none Of you shall ever experience more doubt or distress of mind than I felt, when, as a delegate elect from the Territory of Wisconsin, I took the route to Washington City, in 1848, with a view to secure a seat in the House of Representatives, and the subsequent passage of art act for the establishment Of Minnesota. I was then an utter stranger to all except two or three of the public men of the country. It so happened that I fell in with some members of Congress, who were also on their way to the Federal City, and among Others was Hon. John Wentworth, commonly called "Long John." He manifested much interest in my mission, but advised me by no means to attempt to be admitted to a the as a delegate, but rather to act as a lobby member, and by so doing, the passage Of the Minnesota Bill would, in his opinion, be facilitated. Mr. Wentworth was a good friend of our Territory, and aided much in achieving the final favorable result, but I differed with him in opinion, when he gave me the counsel I have mentioned, and you all know that after severe struggles and considerable delay, I was allowed a seat as the Delegate to Congress from Wisconsin Territory. The bill to organize Minnesota first passed the Senate and was sent to the House. The Senate, being then, as now, democratic, and the House of Representatives being composed of a majority of whigs. The latter amended the bill so as to take effect on the 10th of March instead of from the day of its passage, as fixed in the bill as it passed the Senate. Mr. Polk's administration was about to go out and that of General Taylor to succeed it. The Senate desired to give the appointment of the officers of the new territory to Mr. Polk while the House was as persistent in its own amendment, which would give the offices to the new administration. Thus the bill was suspended between the two bodies, and would probably be killed. The people of Minnesota should regard the Department of the Interior with peculiar interest, for the creation of that new division of the public service carried with it our bill, in the manner following:

The bill for the formation of a new department called the "Home" or "Interior" Department, passed the House; and towards the close of the session its fate was to be decided in the Senate. Several of the democratic senators, although not decided in their opposition,



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cared little whether a measure which bestowed upon the incoming administration a large additional amount of patronage, would be successful or not. It was while laboring under great apprehensions lest the Minnesota bill should be defeated, that I chanced to find myself in the Senate. I expressed my fears to several of the democratic senators, who were my personal friends, and they, to the number of five or six, authorized me to say to the whig leaders in the House, that unless that body receded from its amendment, and thus permitted Minnesota to be organized, they would cast their votes against the bill for the formation of the Interior Department. I hastened back to the House, called together several of the prominent Whig members, and informed them of the state of affairs. Satisfied that the votes of the senators I named would turn the whole scale for or against a measure they particularly desired should succeed, they went to work in the House, and produced so great a change in a short time, that a motion to recede from their amendment to the senate bill was adopted the same evening, by a majority of some thirty or forty, and into our infant Territory was breathed the breath of life.”]

62 first day of the session by the Hon. James Wilson , of New Hampshire, in whose hands they were placed, because he had formerly resided in Iowa, and might be supposed to be better informed, as to our situation and geographical position, than any other member. Yet though the case was by him set forth in a clear and strong light, and no objection was raised to my admission, my claim was referred to the committee on elections, with instructions to examine and report thereon. I will not enter into a detail of the mortifications and vexatious delays to which I was subjected from that time until the question was decided, six weeks after. Although permitted through courtesy to occupy a seat in the House, I was allowed none of the privileges of a Delegate, and indeed I was little more than a lobby member. Meanwhile, my claim was resisted with bitter pertinacity by certain individuals of the committee, particularly by the Hon. Mr. Boyden , of North Carolina, who made a long and labored argument against my right to a seat, and ridiculed the pretension that a Territorial organization still existed in the 63 country north and west of the State of Wisconsin. I made a reply before the Committee, the substance of which will be found appended to this address. You can judge whether your rights were therein properly

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sustained and defended. Finally, the majority of the committee reported in my favor. and the minority presented a strong counter protest. On the 15th of January, the subject was brought before the House, and the resolution introduced by the majority of the committee was adopted by a strong vote, which admitted me to the full enjoyment of the privileges of a Delegate. I should have mentioned that my argument, in answer to the speech of Mr. Boyden was made the basis Of the report of the committee on elections, a copy having been furnished by me to the Chairman at his request.

Notwithstanding the decision of the House of Representatives, which recognized me as the Representative of Wisconsin Territory, it was publicly stated by many members who had voted for my reception, that they did not intend thereby to admit the existence of an organization there, but had been actuated merely by motives of courtesy. This fact was made evident but a few days subsequently, when one of my opponents, being determined to test the question, moved to add an item to the general appropriation bill for defraying the expenses of Wisconsin Territory for the ensuing year, which motion was negatived by a large majority.

The House was then taunted with having admitted a Delegate to represent a territory which had in reality no legal existence.

The great object to which I turned my attention was the bill for the organization of Minnesota Territory. I was kindly allowed, by the committee on Territories of the Senate, to change certain provisions of the bill, so as to meet the wishes of my constituents, and but little difficulty was experienced in procuring its passage by that body. But 64 with the House the case was far different. The bill was there most violently opposed. The committee on Territories had reported amendments to the Senate bill, changing the boundary of Minnesota, and making the act to take effect on the 10th of March, instead of the day of its passage, so as to preclude the administration of Mr. Polk from making the appointments. I was averse to these changes, because we had already sufficient territory, without extending our boundary to the Missouri river; and as to the appointments, I stated

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that Mr. Polk would only exercise the right to nominate two or three of the officers, and that under any circumstances the proposed amendment was to my view, a breach of delicacy and propriety; but in both points I was over-ruled.

An effort was made, in committee, to append the Wilmot Proviso to the Territorial bill; but this I resisted, as I determined, so far as it was in my power, not to allow it to be clogged by a provision wholly superfluous, as the introduction of slavery was prohibited on the east of the Mississippi by the ordinance of 1787, and on the west of that river, by the act of 1819, establishing the Missouri line. The proposition was therefore voted down before the bill was reported to the House, but was brought in as an amendment by the minority of the committee, and was only kept from being adopted, and producing consequently a fierce and angry discussion, which would have resulted in the loss of the bill, by my moving and refusing to withdraw the previous question, which cut off all amendments. On the 22d of February, I moved that the rules of the House be suspended\* to enable me to submit a motion, that a committee of the

\* [the following circular, of which a copy is on file among the papers of this Society, was placed on the desk of each member of the House, in order to aid the motion referred to;

House of Representatives, Saturday, Feb. 17, 1849.

Sir:—It is not probable that the Bill for the organization of Minnesota Territory, will be reached in the order of business before the Committee of the Whole. As a failure of this Bill would be a most serious calamity to the people of that Territory, I take the liberty to appeal to your kind feelings in their behalf, to sustain me in a motion I shall make on Monday to suspend the rules, that the Bill may be taken up and passed. It is not probable that any debate will take place upon it.

I am, sir, very respectfully, Your obedient servant H. H. SIBLEY.]

65 whole be discharged from the further consideration of the bill for the organization of Minnesota Territory, so as to put it upon its passage. The rules were suspended by a vote

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of 100 to 16, and the struggle then commenced upon my moving the previous question. I turned a deaf ear to all entreaties to withdraw it, and I thereby incurred the ire of those who were inimical to the bill. But after an attempt to lay it on the table, or in other words, to defeat it, which was unsuccessful, it was finally ordered to a third reading, and all opposition to it ceased. It was finally passed on the 2d of March, and sent to the Senate, which body refused to concur in the House amendment, changing the date when the bill was to take effect. By great exertion on the part of my friends and myself, the House was at length persuaded to recede from its amendment, and the bill was passed and became a law on the 3d of March, 1849."

\* \* \* \* \*

The removal of the Land Office to Stillwater, was only effected after much delay and difficulty, as a remonstrance had been made by the members of the Wisconsin Legislature, and sent to Senator Walker , against its being removed out of the limits of the State. This obstacle was eventually surmounted by the establishment, of an additional Land District in Wisconsin, the location of which office has been made at Willow river. A weekly mail has been granted us by the Postmaster General, at my earnest and repeated solicitation. I was aided in obtaining this grant by the gentlemen composing the Iowa and Wisconsin delegations.

I offered a resolution in the House, which was adopted, to instruct the Committee on the Post Office to inquire into the expediency of establishing a post route from Fort Snelling to Fort Gaines, also to instruct the Committee of Indian Affairs to inquire into the expediency of extending the laws of the United States over the Northwest tribes, so as to make all amenable to the proper tribunals, and thereby put a stop to the murders and other crimes habitually perpetrated among them. I also drew up a bill which was presented in the Senate by Hon. Robert Smith , appropriating \$12,000 for the construction of a road from the St. Louis river of Lake Superior, to St. Paul and to Point Douglass via the Marine Mills and Stillwater. There was not sufficient time to push these measures through Congress at

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this short session; but they will doubtless be effected next winter, as I do not apprehend any difficulty will be thrown in the way of their passage. Much business appertaining to individuals and to private claims have also been entrusted to me, and I have given it as great a share of my attention as other and more important duties would permit.

Having been furnished with a power of attorney, signed by a large number of Sioux mixed bloods, to dispose of their lands at Lake Pepin, I waited upon the Secretary of War and Commissioner of Indian Affairs repeatedly, with a hope of procuring their concurrence in the furtherance of this object. It was finally decided by the former, that as a change of Administration was so soon to take place, it would not be proper for him to enter into any negotiations with me; and he likewise objected, that as many of the signatures were in the same hand writing, and only witnessed by two persons, that the letter of attorney would not be considered valid in law. I then made the attempt to procure an item to be appended to the General Appropriation Bill, for a sufficient sum to defray the expenses of making a treaty with the owners of the Lake Pepin tract, and for negotiating a general treaty with the Sioux Indians.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the first place, I assert as a proposition which cannot be contradicted, that your Delegate would not have been admitted to a seat if he had appeared there as elected by a party, and that his defeat would have involved the failure of the Minnesota bill, and necessarily of other important projects which were committed solely to his care. I do not make this declaration in any self-gratulation or conceit. There are others among you, who, with the same advantages and the same means, would have performed as much as I have done. But I refer to the fact to illustrate the wisdom of your determination to draw no party lines at the late election. Chosen by the people without regard to the distinctions of Whig or Democrat, my course here has been shaped in exact accordance with that determination. My rule was to keep my ears open and my mouth shut, whenever questions

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were discussed of a party character, or other matters not appertaining in any way to my own region of country.

You are all aware that I appeared before the people as a candidate opposed to drawing party lines. I believed then, and I believe now, that no such distinctions should be made in a Territory, the Delegate of which has no vote, and whose policy is to make himself popular with all parties. When the time comes, be it sooner or later, that we shall have a population sufficient to justify us in looking forward to our admission into the Union at an early day, then, in my view, will be the proper period to mould the political complexion of the State. My own opinions on points of national policy, are as distiller and well-defined as those of any other man.

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Minnesota now occupies no unenviable position. The Government granted us, secures us all in the full possession of privileges almost if not fully equal to those enjoyed by the people of the States. With a Legislative Council elected from among our own citizens, our own judicial tribunals, with a large appropriation for the construction of public buildings, and for a public library, with ample provision for defraying the expenses of the Territorial Government, and with the right of representation in the Halls of Congress, surely we can have no cause of complaint so far as our political situation is concerned. It is for ourselves, by a wise, careful, and practical legislation, and by the improving of the advantages we possess, to keep inviolate the public faith, and to hasten the time when the star of Minnesota, which now but twinkles in the political firmament, shall shine brilliantly in the constellation of our confederated States.